

CROSS WIRES

War films, skateboards, GOMA,
MOET, Septic Tankers and MORE

+ Guest Review!



FB IN DECLINE?

BEST OF: Those Who Don't Know
Whatr They Are Doing!

The usual mess

HIHI

Hello, I just read a quote in an article on the internet which said that intellectualising is a way to avoid horrifying truths. I think it was David Foster Wallace. Well it's not so horrifying but I haven't been out much, or watched/listened/read much, so most things have been smaller private coincidences and personal talks, with other fairly private people. That is good and warm but what have I to report to you right here and now? I'm not dead, I'm not emptied of sociable spirit and stimulation for thought & writing just yet. Your presence is still imagined in my mind while I write this, you who were most important in inspiring this. I'm not empty.

Well, there's a smorgasbord of disturbing public affairs and amusing anecdotes for me to write that I've got a glimpse of from HQ. I've started on Max Easton's *Nothing Pleases: I Like Country Teasers* and it's both opened up speculations about possible cathartic filth and affirmed that anxious, guilty, somewhat repressed-in-shameless-company side of me. What satire is, is becoming clearer to me. What artistic licence is... licence for showing filth and provocative material is still as unclear as ever. I don't know if Max figures it out by the end of the book but it's clear here that people of conscience, and I think most people, laugh at jokes that require content warnings. Satire in itself requires a level of awareness of the rules being flouted and a level of self-control in not doing the thing the thing represents and in not responding to something the thing actually is not. The most offensive thing about gross satire isn't the thing but but how as Max says, it's so easy for it's creators to look down from a pedestal. Yeah well done, tough guy, you out-mocked and out-smarted the richer, bigger guys, or death itself. You know you're rescuing teenagers from their toxic influence with your drawn-out, manly comebacks, though. For people that distant from what is literally described, who probably were thrashed by Dads and schoolmasters and told to harden up, maybe any inch ground gained is a victory. It's cultural evolution, not timeless.

How much do words really matter? I could think of Zizek's idea about acting something out like Rammstein so you don't have to actually do it.

But, the reverse applies with protest songs – you get a cathartic spectacle and the powers that be have a look and factor it into their strategy, weakening what you put forward. Don't I want to just shout things, though? Isn't it my human right, by dignity to be able to believe in protesting in the street, to make signs? And what of the very aggrieved and desperate or not too bright? It's hard to be told in the prime Melbourne-gazing, romanticising age that you're not anywhere close to understanding the mentalities under which your sincere contributions are observed. Further than that, there is no romance, it's hot, some people are nuts and exaggerate every protest interference like they have to prove to Mum and Dad they're sibling's being mean, and you look at your friend just kinda walking along in the herd but not shouting, like “ugh, I'm trying to do my civic responsibility here but this is not ideal to say the least” and you sit around in the Botanical Gardens not drunk, but just depressed to varying degrees. We couldn't find jobs. We rarely left the house and didn't fit in, from near Ipswich or the Gold Coast. We couldn't really see for ourselves in that symbolic power matrix, asserting sincere position statements (sincere as we could manage, desperately clinging on the outer as we were), privately mocking ourselves and other protesters, avoiding that arrogance. The boredom, the regurgitation, the tackiness, the complete lack of authority or leverage we intuited. It was more that we were outsiders too and I was taught to be good, even if it didn't matter, even if nobody saw me.

EXTENDED WAR FILM COMPARISONS SCABBED OF MESSENGER

Harry from Scotland.

I love military history n that but hate violence n systems that make it happen

Gary Oldman just won an oscar for a film which gives a glowing and heroic portrayal of a dude who gets away with this treatment because he was a good war leader and fits into Britain's undeserved self-image as plucky, determined and quietly noble which we perpetuate because of our collective hangover from when we were drunk on imperial power

It's of no consequence he was a white supremacist who, among other things, committed genocide in India

aw what film?

Darkest Hour.

I watched Saving Private Ryan again lately too. Have you seen it? The first 20 odd minutes are some of the best portrayals of historical reality of war, and make for some of the most anti-war material I've ever seen

It does this by just showing what it was like
Then it goes downhill

It starts presenting Germans as all cowards or insidious villains and starts to take a bit of a jingoistic turn. Especially egregious is when a scared, relatable little guy who cries at his inability to kill a German soldier who kills one of his friends,

Later shoots an unarmed prisoner to get the rest to fall in line, and the film frames this as genuinely heroic, like he's matured into someone determined and virtuous
Do you have time rn?

Seriously that first 20 minutes is just something else. It's so good at knocking the "war is noble" mindset out of people. The film does show some of that potential later on but... Yeah it would confuse some people into thinking it was an overall just portrayal

Hah.

Well I feel weird about it
Like it's not like it's intellectual property or anything
But it's just my half-formed thoughts
You can though. If I can just add that

too unbelievable

Like how Nazis always complained about how they were being "censored" by the state until they were in power

too much like an impersonal puzzle

SOUND FAMILIAR

ohh

yes!

It fucking beggars belief, doesn't it
Wait no-one says that anymore.

Um... frontline stuff, the people who made this film made a series called Band of Brothers.

Which is actually a bit better in a lot of respects
The Germans are largely anonymous figures in the distance but that's better than outright sneering villainy

They do get a touch of sympathy here and there
It benefits from focusing on the overall experience of a group of guys based on a real life US airborne company who fought in Europe
More of the running time is spent on their relationships with each other, their lives, than on battles

Here and there it emphasises how much of a battle is spent just... waiting for shit to happen
It's still very much Baseball-loving Apple-pie munching Stars and Stripes shit
But the characters get to be flawed and ordinary dudes. It's quite good
If you like that sort of thing

Somehow the stretches of boredom and the snatches of absurdity, like a bunch of guys in a truck on their way to hold a forest in the dead of winter complaining about how Supply couldn't even send them fucking extra pairs of socks, or three dudes on a foxhole waiting for shooting to start getting really enthusiastic about sharing some chocolate

Yeah it's less the "war is glorious and soldiers are heroes" kind of thing, there's no narrative in the war, they're not all on a mission to capture Hitler's secret doom-fortress or whatever
The only overarching narrative is just the ongoing characterisation of the men and the little events that happen. There's quite a bit of combat but the campaigns are more just backdrops for what they experience. Just the job, basically.

There's also the same old "scaredy-cat overcomes his fear" thing in one episode but they take pains to frame it as more an existential thing than just "man the fuck up"

Like he's scared shitless but the most "heroic" character, who leads them, tries to help him through example rather than shaming.

The best advice he gets is when the most hardass one out of all of them goes up to him and is like "You just need to accept that we're all already dead."

In the end he stops trying to find a way out and starts trying to be a good soldier. As soon as he does this he gets killed.

Yeah cos there's more space for them to be human you get the sense of how fucking insane it is having to do that stuff every single day. Its like playing odds every day, and the best fighters are always the guys who tell themselves there's nothing they can do, in the end

It also ends up with them just fucking about in Austria in the sun and it's gorgeous. The Third Reich is gonna surrender any day now and every important location they roll up to is empty. That company were the first guys to get to Hitler's summer retreat, they got to nick the silverware, raid the wine cellar n even stole the guestbook to help with identifying people who were close to the party brass.

After all of that it's like "This is fucking sweet"

And then they find a concentration camp.

oh

And it's handled... pretty well I'd say. Yeah

SEPTIC TANKERS

There's a new band in Brisbane with some of the most cantankerous, reclusive oddities/prodigies? Ever to sneer over the last cold beer at one another and of course their name is a mix of weird mundanity and hardcore convention as it is Matt K. Phil H. (Piss Pain, Deck In The Pit) and Matt F. (aka Noob from White Cop, Meath Thump, Coward Punch records). Their first show was on a Friday night Bearded Lady, playing first and I got there just in time to snicker and be genuinely impressed at the never ending, no vocals, no solo, no breakdown build up riff drag of Thrash Man. I did reference them in that NeoWO edit in a somewhat gossipy way and can say that they have come a long way rising from the pits of the Bowen Hills practice space with the bands who are too bad to practice in a house and would probably fuck up the Nirvana or Metallica song that is probably police protocol for them to make you play, for them to sing along to maybe as punishment or PR (is it written in

law yet?). Their practice and commitment has paid off and there's a look like they're both competing and syncing (least Matt and drummer Phil. The lyrics that I know of are entirely about depressing old men or curt little utterances about anxious mundane occurrences in Matt K. double entendre/ superficially-to-the-point Rorschache test style. IM SURROUNDED ON ALL SIDES is about an anxiety attack on the bus, for instance. It all sort of recalls Matt's LOOKPOND and French Horns days. Phil's hard hitting and precision overwhelming anything about the slight smart arsery and downer lyrics that'd make a proper metal audience say 'aw whore these cunts' (tho what would I know) and Noob's strong bass contribution and also from a distance looking kinda rough with shaved head, beard, boots but, looking closely at his guitar strap, wearing a badge with a comically deformed swastika on it. Now if you reckon it's risky putting that in print (given some violent people in both anti-this, anti-that worked up internet threateners) I'll have you know that it actually means nothing at all. It would be like bashing anybody who is not a N word (the white N word) – ah k N*** if that doesn't work – or, who looks like one and is in the demographic who would be tempted to be one but settles with stylistically flirting with it and rambling like a drunk mechanical engineering student dabbling in politics. OH and you see the fire in Phil's eyes glancing over if you dare fuck with us, and the actually insane, reckless look in that Matt K's eyes as he's reclaimed teenage vigor in scarier, fatter, shorter haired, more world weary confidence. Then when you get close he'll turn into Lars Ulrich and look at you like a clueless puppy. Metal! Do you like my metal? I'm thirsty! Let's do something fun! Aww! Septic Tankers don't sound shit, mix of crisp septicide, social realism and a bit of shit, kept under control.

FILLER PHASEBOOK

How many of you are waiting for everyone to move on from here? Myspace had it's time, is it not the course of the internet?

We got tricked by the conservative design and real name requirement into thinking here was a safer and respectable option. "You don't put your

real name on the internet," but then we bared all, making us more naive than those poor 15 yr old girls behind thick eyeliner.

Can't say I haven't been warned a long time ago. This site's been a part of my life for about a decade, since I was a teenager. Did anyone have any idea of what they might be able to do?

Don't get scared, now. I'm not playing the big over-protective guardian discouraging your cultural access because of the bad guys. It might seem like that, because some of us had nothing else and the only alternative seems to be me. "My writing, right now, no computer, you get it?" That felt poisonous to contemplate. It's ok, though, because neither underground opinionators here nor the researchers and analysts overseeing some communications there can disturb you. You can pivot 360 degrees. There's not much to see when I do it myself, but there's much more connection to the world than when these things bothered me. Don't just look up, look around is what I'm saying. We think we do but how much is looking side to side and up and down in a disorienting neck-straining exercise?

Again, again, we know that but the addict's affliction stands. Still, an alcoholic would rather drink in a toilet cubicle than an old haunt warped by corporate and political interests. A house, a park.

How much more can I milk the diversity in my own feed? Use it to reach other people meaningfully? I was not being a total idiot by staying, I was making do with what I perceived to be the most efficient way to contribute to society and to get to know people (by watching, by keeping a somewhat curated, broad spectrum of humans in my feed). Broad social input means a more broadly relatable, broadly relevant content, within the constraints of my own situation and personality, of course. In theory there might be just too much to process and carry around with you. You're a crossover between those who don't usually mix. If you've sought only your own comfort and enjoyment for a long time then you might not realise the cruel, anguishing divergence of language and meaning. I'm not talking about slang or accent, I'm talking

about what words refer to and where they fit into the weave of somebody's brain, some more or less malleable, some tightly wound, some requiring needle precision of wording, context and expression. This is all another way of wording what is common sense, isn't it? I'm waking up to what normal people know, perhaps.

TOO MANY BLANKS/PATCHWORK PSYCHOLOGY

I want to see a picture emerging, not just some underlying common sense that becomes precisely clear to me in the moment that I need it before it disappears from mind and then just tickles the edges of every time you have to be simple and ignore that people are different, that what you're saying isn't enough. I might be a bright girl but politics might do my head in because something is wrong when I tell the people I know and love something that won't land at all. I wouldn't be showing them how or why with sensitivity, I'm telling, and they're telling me. The bright girl, the common sense girl, knows she should do something for social change but rightfully sees the awkwardness or impossibility of getting across what she deep down knows. Knowing she is the fabric of society, she trains her tongue as she is taught to train her body. She keeps the people around her together and she expresses herself in an almost goody-two-shoes irony, organising her belongings and her politics alike unnaturally crisply, like a cross or a star sign. It's not possible to execute certain tactics of social survival when you're troubled by too many views and too many people at once, with no diplomatic genius or authoritative voice. Telling people to get along, or saying such-and-such is a dickhead, or choosing one identity-congruent interest are a few ways to find voice. Most differences are petty – until the rough calculation comes to a decision and the hand moves 1cm to the other box. Until a sleight of the tongue sticks in somebody's mind, weight just enough to stop somebody texting you. These things could never make you hate someone who you've survived with.

The appeal of facebook is that they can place their icons of subtle dissent and a down-to-earth, connecting with humans here and now counterpoint to the world of routines and

calculations and structures out of their control centre stage. The appeal for somebody like me is that I can progressively, foggily paint with laboured words and scattered behind-the-scenes type images something that branches across social types and with dedicated practice, be able to be presented in a way that can be sensibly understood. There is a great deal of untangling in the mind that goes on. A great deal of filling in blanks. If there are two very different people in my mind, scrolling in their news feeds, I will have to reconsider many words that mean different things even to people who grew up together. That's the nature of communication, isn't it? Again that common sense. It doesn't come out that way, though. Words don't work so well like they promise, you can't say how you feel and what you see and what you want and what is truly good. Clothes don't aesthetically pleasing symbols and gestures don't. Cue that old post-modern thing, the mix-and-match, the secret identities, the retreatism, the disordered behavior and emotion. Many of those smart, neat boys and girls draw inspiration from mass pop culture. This is one tactic of social survival (and thus, survival of common sense functioning) drawing from a theoretical middle ground. Naively, confidently reflecting media reference points enables flexibility in that a) you can pass off your deep convictions as "Nothing much really, Dad, it's normal", b) allude at some real practicality, some real common sense that made all these people do this. As a back-up, you will have some emotional or fact-based explanations ("Did you know...") and a swift gesture to reassert social power, if your images of likeminded or sympathetic crowds haven't been drowned out by the conjuring of the other's imagined army of people like them, or who are sympathetic to them. To these conflicting crowds, they might say, "Go away!" and conjure the memory of select people interwoven by shared identity, peaceful coexistence or basic interdependence. The Family, The Church, The RSL, The Gym, The School, People Who Surf, Another Shared Reference Point. You stick to them, or imagine sticking to them for the time being. You may even blurt out ironical, self-deprecating jokes or exaggerated role-acting. I am a TV character is it not funny darling? Or, you could be too perfect, too cosy, too clouded with fairy floss. Or, you could have a nervous

breakdown or become ill. That, of course, has to be reined in or evolved somehow to proper, compartmentalised art performance so you can at least find something to work sincerely and purely concentrated on – that is, the frame which your inauthentic compromise now splutters along inside. The music, the art, the writing which now demands that you have practical common sense. There's editing software, cameras, logistics instruments, all sorts of things to zero in on that aren't people and aren't yourself. You blank out the undercurrent of real awareness of what constitutes conflict, as is usually necessary for sharp, precise focus, as is usually necessary to confidently navigate social and political power without feeling you're being over stretched or living double lives. Back to that nineties pastiche thing, where you can reflect everyone and everything you want, or to the continual attention to fashion. You want to be a bit elusive. The sharp common sense girl (or guy or queer) wants to, deep down, bring all the separated, conflicting groups to peace and shared interests for the basic good things. Just like me, see. Her attempts might result in more cliquishness because her mode of expression is limited, just like mine is. When it works, there's real social power, and when it works, it won't be perfectly inclusive and safe for everyone because nobody knows or can embody everything. When it doesn't really work, it'll destroy you or it could work a bit better. I can't find the right word! I can't explain!, I either come across like I'm one of those political people or these political people! Ew! But I've been wanting to say something all week! "I don't have any clothes!" Then, you either embrace the falling apart, letting yourself go in wild rants or messy, embarrassing prose, an incoherent outfit, or stick to the same basic duller things, a uniform, a pair of trackies, black hair dye bun. You bond over that, you frame it, you show you've got some sense, you give your brain a job. It's a bit of a precarious situation, though, and you're likely to get a 'real' job. Like a survival job or a job imposed by a dependant like a baby, sick person or the people who need employees or comrades.

Their brains switch between the default network (the introspective, deep memory sort of one) and the executive, sharp common sense one. They are too kind of channels where neurotransmitters go,

to give fuel for parts of the brain. It is harder for people who are more 'off with the fairies' to switch between the modes whenever it is in their interest. The affliction or the creative, caution-inducing blessing is associated with iron deficiency, childhood stress, bodily alienation from surroundings, social alienation, higher psychiatric spectrum ratings, interest in philosophy, conflicting social or cultural interests, marijuana intoxication, caffeine use disorders, veganism, misuse of mindfulness and detachment theories, misuse of stoicism, not giving a shit, head injury, being a kind person and being overwhelmed, being a sweet and quiet child, being a sweet elderly person, sitting at the computer all day, disliking everything everyone is doing around you and now knowing that you are allowed to dislike it or if you could have the words for it, cognitive dissonance and so on. No, no there can be smart common sense girls who are ditzes too. Oh yeah um, well, they still socially fit in but that last paragraph is for some people and not the others with whom I am describing, with these analyses in these sentences, for your reading enjoyment. Thank you!!

Um so well yesterday, I had a really good idea for this but I was sitting on my floor to write with the laptop Daddy gave me and I know, I should go shopping for a new one but it's like so expensive and I just bought some shoes off ebay and a phone battery for my pink phone so I can have a different phone and juice which is the non preservative juice because, I heard some people have allergies to the juice and I feel way better in my personal opinion um, so yeah I was trying to be good, like save money on not buying this laptop but like I need it for school, but I need a desk too because I thought I could do my yoga stretches on the floor but I ended up just hurting my neck so, I had a break from my Law and Social Studies class and, because I thought well the stupid internet is not working and my health is important. I also went to the chemist and bought some iron tablets. Which is another reason why I bought the expensive juice because it is good for iron tablets and my brain isn't working properly,

AVRIL LAVIGNE

Someone said I was like the Avril Lavigne of Brisbane just hanging out like yeah, I'm just chillin seeing what'll happen and today, I thought that they are right in some respects NOT including, that Girlfriend song, and plus I learned my lesson from Sk8er Boy because I don't judge people even if they don't look like normal people and support people's dreams even if they don't seem like, um, I mean if they are like not, um, like *conventionally successful in material wealth*. One thing that I do, that I must admit because I am an honest person, is that I have talked about skateboarding and also gaming and I don't go skateboarding because I'm scared of cars. I was walking out of Aldi and saw through the glass mall doors a dude doing some impressive kickflip twist.. kinda thing which he didn't land but he was getting there and they looked like they had been real skateboarders since 1998. They were very tanned like, the leathery tan, and like odder clothes and like they owned the stairs in front of the intersection and, they had a bottle of MOET in full view and paper bags with MOET like wtf, also the police are around, and I walked past wondering like, am I like them? They're like way older but like, I look more like them than the really shiny, sophisticated women and they actually talked to me! They said "Yo! Yo... Yoooo!" and I didn't really know what to say, like what? So I just pretended I didn't hear because they were probably up to no good and I think one of them said, "See if she has any speed". And I walked home with my tote bag like, "who am I?" and like I looked kind of bloated cause I'm pmsing a bit and I had heaps of pasta.. Oh and I walked past the other chemist in the area and I was like... "speed, speed... Oh yeah! My adderall prescription!" So I bought that with a little card I like to call Daddy's credit card which is declined! Omg... I'm going to have to visit him in his office soon.

TUESDAY BLUES TALES SCABBED OFF MESSENGER

[Person] was loudly pouring cups of red goop in [a free cinema] straight from the goop sack holding it up real high and cackling was pretty funny

"i knew a guy who filed for bankruptcy and got

all his super paid out then spent it on synths “

“i had one [dream] where i went to london alone and i was at a show watching bands and everyone was like 'yeah cool mate you belong here' then someone gave me a pill and instead of making me high it gave me diarrhea and i shat everywhere at the show and they were all like 'oi get the fuck out never come back' then i was on the streets of london and realised centrelink had cut me off and i had no money and i didn't know what to do, then i woke up “

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cheers

